



DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR

news release

Fish and Wildlife Service

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PUBLIC HEARINGS TO BE HELD
ON FUTURE OF NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE SYSTEM

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will hold a series of eight hearings across the country to allow the public to comment on the future direction of the National Wildlife Refuge System.

The hearings, to be held April 29 through June 1, will focus on "Refuges 2003: A Plan for the Future," a 10-year management plan and draft environmental impact statement establishing guidelines for administering the refuge system as it approaches its 100th anniversary in 2003.

To encourage public discussion, the draft document presents seven options for future management of the 488 refuges in the system. These options run the gamut from limited management and public use of refuges to greatly increased emphasis on economic and non-wildlife-oriented use of refuge lands.

As a result of public comment, the eventual proposed action may be composed of elements from various options.

The draft "Refuges 2003" document was prepared only after the Service received extensive public comments both in writing and during a series of more than 30 public meetings held nationwide. The public may comment on the document until June 15, 1993, and the final plan is expected to be completed by the end of this year.

(more)

Hearings will be held from 1-5 p.m. and 7-10 p.m. at the following locations and dates:

- o Arlington, Virginia, April 29
Holiday Inn
4610 N. Fairfax Drive
- o Atlanta, Georgia, May 11
Ramada Atlanta Airport
1419 Virginia Avenue
- o Phoenix, Arizona, May 13
YWCA Leadership Development Center
9440 N. 25th Avenue
- o Portland, Oregon, May 18
BPA Building
911 N.E. 11th Avenue, 1st floor Auditorium
- o Anchorage, Alaska, May 20
Fairview Community Center
1121 E. 10th Avenue
- o Bloomington, Minnesota, May 25
Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge
3815 E. 80th Street
- o Woburn, Massachusetts, May 26
Radisson Hotel
2 Forbes Road
- o Lakewood, Colorado, June 1
FWS Regional Office
3rd Floor Conference Room,
134 Union Boulevard

Written comments on Refuges 2003 will be received until June 15, 1993. Those unable to attend a hearing should send comments to: Chief, Division of Refuges, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 4401 N. Fairfax Drive, Room 670, Arlington, Virginia 22203.